What Is a Fruit?

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a fruit is "the usually edible reproductive body of a seed plant; especially one having a sweet pulp associated with the seed." In other words, it is the edible part of a plant derived from a flower. Fruits are nature's instruments used to spread seeds. Containing high amounts of fructose, most fruits are sweet. Thus fruits include apples, oranges, tomatoes, pumpkins, nuts, squash and pears.

What Is a Vegetable?

Vegetables are herbaceous plant parts. They are the parts of the plant that are not fruits and can be used for eating. These parts include the root, leaf or stem of a plant. Some vegetables are radishes, carrots, broccoli, celery, garlic, onion, cabbage, potatoes, yams, lettuce and rhubarb.

Fruits Thought to be Vegetables

Some fruits that are commonly thought to be vegetables are tomatoes, cucumbers, avocados, squashes, olives, peapods and peppers.

Technical vs Culinary Definitions

* 1. Despite the technical differences between fruits and vegetables, many fruits are treated as vegetables by cooks. Culinarily speaking, fruits are supposed to be sweet with seeds, and vegetables are any other plant products that are not sweet. Culinary vegetables include rhubarb, tomatoes, squash and peppers. Nuts, though technically fruits, are considered neither fruit nor vegetable in the culinary sense.

Neither Fruit nor Vegetable

There are some plants that are neither a fruit or vegetable. These include bananas and mushrooms. Bananas, for example, are herbs. Mushrooms are fungi.